

One Hundred and Fiftieth Anniversary

Presbyterian Sunday School

Allentown, New Jersey

1809-1959



November 8-11, 1959



TO THE GLORY OF GOD

AND IN MEMORY OF

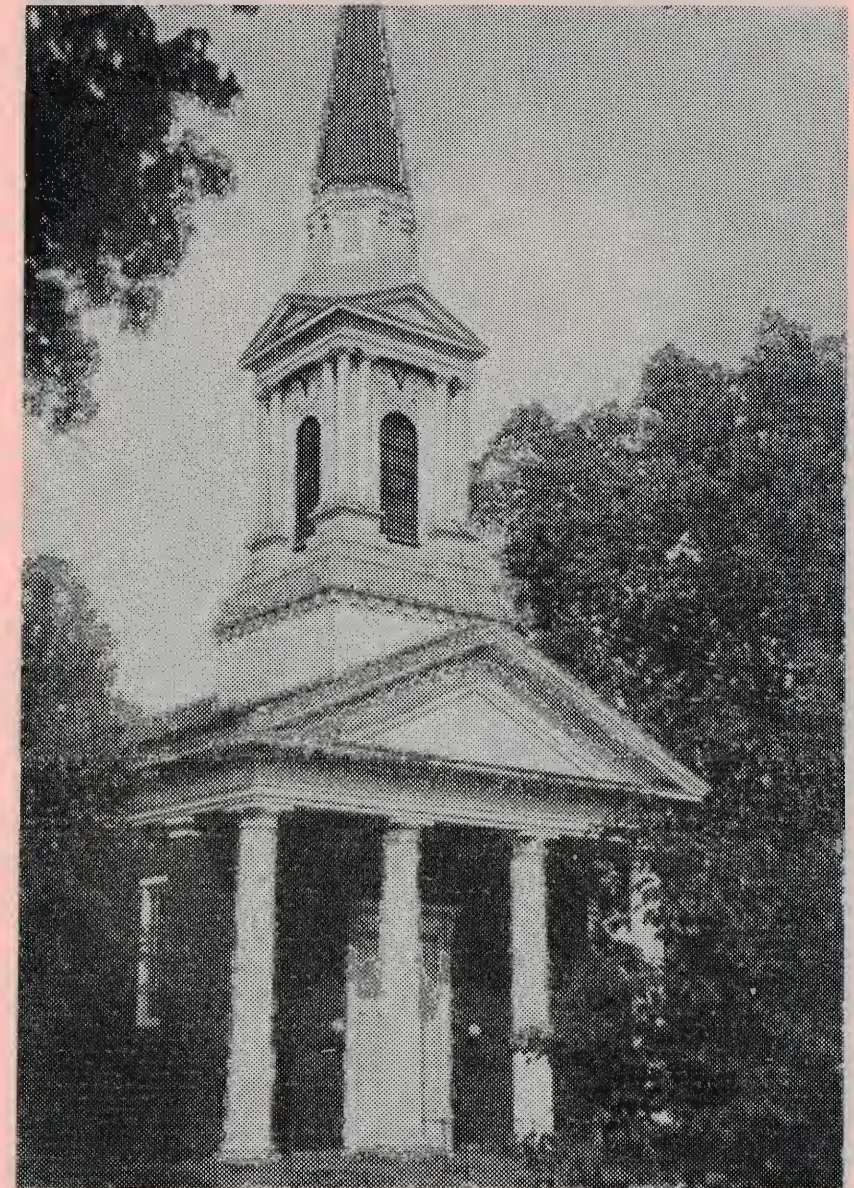
MARIA FRELINGHUYSEN CORNELL

1778-1832

WHO ESTABLISHED HERE IN THE YEAR 1809
ONE OF THE FIRST SUNDAY SCHOOLS
IN AMERICA

ALLENTOWN PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Founded 1720



EDWARD H. SCHULTE, *Pastor*

EVERETT B. STORMS, *Church School Superintendent*

The Sunday School

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The instruction of children in religion has been a custom ever since religions came into existence. The Bible records that instruction in religious teachings was given to both young and old. It was realized by all nations that the preservation of their religion must be accomplished by systematic training of the young. During medieval times this training was completely neglected by the religious leaders. Martin Luther and his fellow reformers began again this instruction and organized a movement which resulted in a general religious awakening. But such schools as were established by Luther in Germany, Knox in Scotland, and Richard Baxter in England were irregular in their purpose and results. Often the entire school was made up of adults, and where instruction of children was attempted, it was found necessary to teach the rudiments of reading, etc., before they could understand the religious teaching. While these isolated attempts were of great benefit in awakening the desire for knowledge, yet, because of the methods, those children were not reached, to whom the instruction would have done the most good.

Such were the conditions when, in 1780, Robert Raikes, publisher of the Gloucester Journal, conceived the idea of regularly organized schools to be held on Sunday in the poorer districts of Gloucester, England. The children were, for the most part, employed in neighboring factories and mills during the week, and on Sunday spent their time at play in the dirt and filth of the city streets. Raikes secured the services of four teachers, whom he paid to give secular and religious instruction during the whole of the Sabbath day. The children were invited to attend, the only requirement being that each child should go with clean hands and face. The influence of these schools was so great that similar ones were soon established in other neighborhoods and towns. The large expense of hiring teachers soon brought about the voluntary teacher plan that has been traditional ever since. A letter of Raikes's, published in 1784 in the *Gentlemen's Magazine*, in which he described the movement, attracted wide attention, and brought about the beginning of the present world-wide Sunday School organization.

In this country John Wesley unsuccessfully attempted to establish Sunday Schools in Georgia about 1790. Despite his failure there, Sunday



SECOND SUNDAY SCHOOL BUILDING

ERECTED 1856

Schools were in existence in Philadelphia and Boston before 1800. A Baptist Sunday School was started in Trenton in 1816 and in the same year the New York Sunday School Union was formed. It was not until 1823 that the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church officially recognized them as a part of the church. Years before this, in 1809, our Sunday School was started by the pastor's wife, Maria Frelinghuysen Cornell. It may very well be that ours was the first Sunday School in rural America.

Very little is known about the early years because records were poorly kept or not kept at all. Having no official sanction it was very local in character, its destiny being guided entirely by Mrs. Cornell. It is known however, that it has functioned without interruption ever since the beginning.

That is was a moving force in our early church it attested to by Dr. Henry Perkins (Pastor, 1820-1864), who said in his history of the Allentown Church, when referring to the great revival that swept the land in 1839:

"The awakening in 1839 began to manifest itself in the early part of February, and was first seen in my Bible Class, composed mostly of young ladies. On addressing them one Sabbath morn in the Chapel, a building near the church, I observed etc."

During that year 74 persons united with the church, all on profession of faith. Such was the power and influence of our Sunday School in the early days.

It is gratifying on this our 150th anniversary to know that our Sunday School stood at the very forefront of the Sunday School movement. Today it is alive, vigorous and growing, a living testimonial to Mrs. Cornell and the many dedicated men and women who, through the years, have served their God and their church through the Sunday School.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

NOVEMBER 8, 1959 — 11 A. M.

*"The Lord is in His Holy Temple; Let all the earth
keep silence before Him."*

ORGAN PRELUDE — "Come, Holy Ghost, Lord God" — J. S. Bach
"Andante in G" — — — — — Batiste

*HYMN — No. 57

*INVOCATION AND LORD'S PRAYER

*DOXOLOGY

RESPONSIVE READING — No. 43

*GLORIA PATRI

JUNIOR CHOIR

PASTORAL PRAYER AND CHORAL RESPONSE

OFFERTORY — "Intermezzo in E" — — — — — Brahms

OFFERTORY PRAYER

*HYMN — No. 194

SCRIPTURE READING — Psalm 119 sel. vs. — — — — — II Peter I:16-21

ANTHEM — "Praise Ye the Father" — — — — — Gounod

SERMON — "God's Word for Our Day" — — — — — Dr. Peter K. Emmons
President, Board of Trustees
Princeton Theological Seminary

*HYMN — No. 333

*BENEDICTION AND SILENT MEDITATION

ORGAN POSTLUDE — "Toccata" — — — — — J. H. Rogers

The Founder

MARIA FRELINGHUYSEN CORNELL

1778 - 1832

Maria, the first daughter and second child of General Frederick Frelinghuysen (American Revolution), was born on March 12, 1778, probably at Millstone, N. J. When about 20 years of age she was married to the Rev. John Cornell, a young clergyman who had studied at the famed Log College at Neshaminy, Pa. (Wm. Tennent) and at Queens College (Rutgers). Licensed to preach by the Dutch Reformed Church about 1798, he was called to the pulpit of the Allentown Presbyterian Church in 1800. Here he remained until 1820 when he removed to Somerville where he conducted the Classical Academy until 1828. Retiring to his wife's family homestead near Millstone because of poor health, he died in 1835. Mrs. Cornell had preceded him in death in 1832 and is buried beside the Hillsborough Reformed Church in Millstone.

Maria Frelinghuysen was 16 years old when her mother died and 26 when her father passed away. She was the granddaughter of the Rev. Frederick Frelinghuysen, the second of that line in this country, and the great-granddaughter of the Rev. Theodorus Jacobus Frelinghuysen, who established most of the Dutch Reformed Churches in central New Jersey. It was in her grandmother's house in Somerville, a New Jersey historical site, that the Theological Seminary now at New Brunswick, had its beginning.

Her younger brother, Theodore, rose to great prominence. In 1844 he ran for the vice-presidency of the United States on the Whig ticket with Henry Clay. Being nine years older, she exerted a great influence on him as a young man, and he often publicly acknowledged his gratitude to her. On her death in 1832 he expressed himself thus:

"I have sustained a sore bereavement in the death of my sister. She stood in the early relation of a mother to me. I was deprived of my mother at six years of age, and this dearly cherished sister, by a kind Providence, was ordained to fill her place, which she did most tenderly and faithfully."

After her death there appeared an obituary in the Christian Intelligencer from the pen of the Hon. Peter D. Vroom, governor of New Jersey (1829-1836). Governor Vroom bears high testimony to Mrs. Cornell's fidelity as a wife and mother, to her unusual excellencies of mind and heart, to her boundless charity, to her assiduous ministrations among all the children of sorrow, to her intelligent piety and her humble, exemplary life. Notwithstanding her consistent walk, she was sometimes exposed to periods of religious darkness and on one occasion expressed herself to an intimate friend:

"I am sometimes ready to conclude all past experience delusive. And what then? Shall I remain satisfied and give the enemy cause to triumph and the world to reproach? Oh no, I will not, can not, give over the pursuit. If I perish, it must be by the way of the Cross. There, and there only, hang all my expectations, all my desires."

Mrs. Cornell was the mother of a large family. At her death in 1832 there were eight surviving children. During the pastorate in Allentown she lost four other children who are buried in our church yard, two of whom passed away in 1809, the year she started our Sunday School. Amid these sorrows, her faith was triumphant, once expressing herself to a friend, she said:

"If God in Christ is the portion of my soul, surely I may rejoice in this valley of tears; and although billow after billow may be commissioned to roll over me, still I will rejoice. He can, and will say, 'Peace be still,' whenever the design of His providence is effected."

Such was the woman we honor today. Surely her life was a blessing to the church and community. May we dedicate ourselves anew to carry on that work of the Kingdom which was started here so many years ago by this woman.

The Church

1809

THE REV. JOHN CORNELL, PASTOR

SESSION

Jacob Fisher
William Foord
Theophilus Forman
Henry Harper
James Hughes
Amos Hutchinson
Peter Wikoff
Samuel Wikoff
Robert Wilson

TRUSTEES

Jacob Fisher
David Hay
Jacob Hutchinson
James H. Imlay
Robert Montgomery
Garret P. Wikoff
Robert Wilson

Sunday School Superintendent
Maria Frelinghuysen Cornell

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KNOWN SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

Maria Frelinghuysen Cornell	1809-1820
George Vanderbeck	1856-1870
Henry R. Taylor	1870-1897
George V. Taylor	1897-1914
Newell R. Burk	1914-1927
Hugh M. Jansen	1927-1947
Everett B. Storms	1947-

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PASTORS OF THE CHURCH

Eleazer Wales	1730-1734
Charles McKnight	1744-1766
William Schenck	1774-1778
George Faitoute	1779-1781
Joseph Clark, D.D.	1788-1796
John Cornell	1800-1820
Henry Perkins, D.D.	1820-1864
K. P. Ketchem, D.D.	1864-1871
Lawrence M. Colfelt, D.D.	1872-1874
George Swain, D.D.	1874-1912
Henry B. Strock, D.D.	1912-1914
James A. Matheson	1915-1932
Robert W. Mark, D.D.	1933-1949
Frederick J. Allsup	1949-1954
Charles W. Hassler	1954-1958
Edward H. Schulte	1958-

ORDER OF WORSHIP

NOVEMBER 8, 1959 — 7:30 P. M.

*"The Lord is in His Holy Temple; Let all the earth
keep silence before Him."*

ORGAN PRELUDE — *"Evening Prayer and Chimes"* Calver

ORGAN AND PIANO DUO — *"Largo"* Handel

FRIEDA R. PAULSEN AND JEAN T. SCHULTE

*HYMN — No. 52

*INVOCATION AND LORD'S PRAYER

*DOXOLOGY

RESPONSIVE READING — No. 51

*GLORIA PATRI The Rev. Chester A. Galloway
Moderator, Monmouth Presbytery

ANTHEM — *"How Brightly Shines the Morning Star"* 16th Century

PASTORAL PRAYER AND CHORAL RESPONSE

OFFERTORY — *"Children's Prayer"* Humperdinck

OFFERTORY PRAYER

*HYMN — No. 267

*SCRIPTURE — Psalm 23 Unison

SERMON — *"His House and His Children"*
The Rev. Theodore Rath
Executive, Synod of New Jersey

*HYMN — No. 223

*BENEDICTION AND SILENT MEDITATION

ORGAN POSTLUDE — *"Toccata in D Minor"* G. B. Nevin

*The congregation and friends are invited to the Church School Building to examine
historical exhibit and for refreshments.*

The Church

The first seed of Presbyterianism was sown in our community about 1710, by the Rev. Joseph Morgan, pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Freehold (Old Tennent), and located at what was then known as White Hill. While a Presbyterian minister under the care of the Presbytery of Philadelphia, he was also, at the same time, Dominie of the Freehold Dutch Reformed Church, he being the second Dutch Reformed pastor installed in New Jersey. When he appeared in court to take the necessary oaths as minister of the gospel, he was presented by representatives of both congregations. These oaths were required because he was not a minister of the Church of England. According to "An Act of Parliament for exempting her Majesty's Protestant subjects dissenting from the church of England from the penalties of certain laws," every minister not in the communion of the English Church was obliged to take an oath that he would not teach the doctrine of transubstantiation, nor anything contrary to the doctrine of the Trinity, as taught in the 39 articles of the English Church. This was called "qualifying," and in this manner the Rev. Morgan "qualified" himself in December 1709.

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During the early years of the church, for long periods at a time, there was no settled minister in our midst. Services were then held no oftener than once a month, and were conducted by supplies sent by Presbytery. It was during these periods that our pulpit was occupied by many of the great preachers of the day.

"New Brunswick, August 8, 1738 (this was the first meeting held after its being erected into a Presbytery from that of New York by the Synod). Robert English supplicating for supplies at Allen's Town agreed that Mr. Gilbert Tennent preach at Allen's Town upon the last Sabbath of this instance." Mr. Tennent, son of William, was one of the most powerful preachers of his time, often being referred to as "ye son of thunder."

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"New Brunswick, November ye 23, 1742—Mr. William Tennent ordered to supply Allen's Town on the first Sabbath in February, first in April and first in May." Mr. Tennent occupied the pulpit many times from 1742 to 1771. Mr. Jonathan Edwards Jr. was ordered to supply the church at Allentown for the year 1768 with Mr. William Tennent to administer communion.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

NOVEMBER 11, 1959 — 8 P. M.

*"The Lord is in His Holy Temple; Let all the earth
keep silence before Him."*

ORGAN PRELUDE — "Offertoire" Batiste
"Minster Chimes" Calver

*HYMN — No. 411

*INVOCATION — Welcome

SOLO — "The Lord's Prayer" Malotte
Joan Satterthwaite Carom, Soprano

RECOGNITION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENTS

RECOGNITION OF SUNDAY SCHOOL SERVICE

ANTHEM — "Holy Lord of All" Welsh Chorale

OFFERTORY — "On Wings of Song" Mendelssohn

OFFERTORY PRAYER

DEDICATION OF CORNELL HOUSE

SOLO — "The House I Live In" Robinson
Everett B. Storms, Bass

DEDICATION OF MEMORIAL PLAQUE

*HYMN — No. 267

*BENEDICTION AND SILENT MEDITATION

ORGAN POSTLUDE — "Festive March" Hurst

*The congregation and friends are invited to the Church School Building to examine
historical exhibit and for refreshments.*

On May 11, 1746, the Rev. David Brainerd assisted the pastor, the Rev. Charles McKnight, in administering the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. He was a close friend of Mr. McKnight, often stayed at his home on the parsonage farm and on several occasions participated in the services of the church.

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The Rev. John Witherspoon, president of the College of New Jersey (Princeton), a member of the Continental Congress and the only clergyman to sign the Declaration of Independence, was the outstanding Presbyterian leader of the Revolutionary era. He occupied our pulpit on several occasions. In June 1788 at the installation of the Rev. Joseph Clark as pastor (1778-1796), he preached the sermon and gave the charge to the pastor. In 1800, Dr. Clark was elected Moderator of the General Assembly.

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In 1858, a Young Men's Christian Association was formed in the church. At the organizational meeting the principal speaker was John Wanamaker, merchant, postmaster general and prominent Presbyterian layman.

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Dr. Syngman Rhee, president of the Republic of Korea, occupied the pulpit of this church, both morning and evening, February 20, 1910. The following church notice appeared in the local paper at the time: "The pulpit of the Presbyterian Church next Sabbath will be occupied by Syngman Rhee, a native of Korea and a student in Princeton Seminary, morning and evening. Mr. Rhee has a wonderful story to tell of the gospel's progress in his own country and of his own life. He was a political prisoner for seven years and part of that time was in the stocks, so that he had to be fed like an infant. Drs. Woodrow Wilson, Erdman and Parkhurst commend him mostly highly as a brilliant and instructive speaker."

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About 1850, a daughter of the church, Catherine L. Beatty, went out as a missionary to India where she laboured for eight long, and at that time, weary years.

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During Mr. McKnight's pastorate, a royal charter was obtained from

King George II, under the Governorship of Jonathan Belcher. It was granted on February 21, 1749, and incorporated the Presbyterian Churches of Monmouth County—Allentown, Cranbury, Old Tennent and Shrewsbury. This Charter is kept in the department of the Secretary of State, Trenton.

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In 1740, George Whitefield, the great English evangelist, who had arrived in this country in 1739, came to Allentown and preached with much success. He, the Tennents and Jonathan Edwards were the leading lights of the Great Awakening of that period.

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There is a popular misconception that in colonial days the countryside was dotted with many little white churches with tall steeples. Actually this was not so. The early meeting house was topped by a cupola. The first church in this country with a steeple was Old North, Boston, designed by Sir Christopher Wren. Being an Episcopal Church (Church of England), the other Protestant denominations were slow in adopting their type of architecture, and it was not until well into the last century that the steeple came into general use (Ours in 1858). It has been said of the meeting house, that when the cupola was taken down and the steeple erected, it then became a church.

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Until 1840 the only method of lighting used in the church was candlelight. At that time the minutes of the Trustees first mentioned the use of oil lamps. But it was several years before they were much used, probably because candles cost 10 cents a pound while coal oil was a dollar and a half a gallon.

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During the American Revolution, two women of our church and community rose to prominence through their deeds of heroism. From Dr. George Swain's Centennial address delivered on June 20, 1876, we quote the following: "Moreover, from among us it is said, was the famous Molly Pitcher; she who, at the Battle of Monmouth, acted the role of cannoneer in the place of her husband or some other brave man who had fallen beside his gun. She is reputed to have been the daughter of John Hanna, of Allentown, was of North Ireland extraction, and had been for a time a serving maid in the family of the father of Captain James Bruere. She

was perhaps, the wife of a soldier named John Maban." After the war Captain Bruere was a Trustee and Salary Treasurer of the church. The duty of the Salary Treasurer was to collect from the members (usually at the Congregational meeting) the amounts they had subscribed for the support of the minister.

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Less known, but perhaps of equal importance is the name of Virginia (Ginny) Jackson. It was she, who, dressed in a militiaman's uniform, rode at the head of Washington's army, guiding them through the woods and over back roads from Trenton to Princeton on the eve of the Battle of Princeton. The Jacksons, a well-to-do family from the north of Ireland, had settled a large tract of land near Allentown. After the war Ginny married and moved to Pennsylvania. Her father and mother are buried in our church yard, the gravestones being just outside the study door. In 1793, her father, James Jackson was elected an elder in the church.

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As we celebrate the anniversary of our Sunday School today, let us not forget that our church was an old church when the Sunday School was founded in 1809. It was then almost 100 years old and soon we will celebrate its 250th anniversary. Let us not forget also that our church has always been Presbyterian, and established by men and women of Presbyterian persuasion, it has so continued to this day. At no time has any other church polity been considered. Her ministers have been orthodox in their teaching and evangelistic in their preaching. Several times, and many years at a time, the congregation was pastorless, yet through all these years they held firm to the Presbyterian form of government.

It is but natural to point with pride to the many great names that have been associated with our church. More important, however, are the hundreds of men and women who gave their time, talents and devotion to the Sunday School, Women's Organizations, Young People's Societies, Choirs and various boards of the church. Without them it would not have stood for almost two and one-half centuries. Let us, who are for but a brief time trustees of the great heritage, dedicate ourselves anew to the task of carrying on the great work begun so many years ago by our forefathers.

